

Remarks/Arguments:

Claims 1-33 are presently pending and all claims stand rejected. Applicants herein amend claims 1, 12, 21, and 28. Support for the amendment can be found throughout the application as originally filed. For example, see page 6, lines 12-26. No new matter has been added.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended by the Examiner in the telephone interview on October 30, 2006. During the interview, applicants presented the arguments set forth below. In particular, applicants argued that the conditional nature of the generating step found in claims 1, 12, and 28 and being added to claim 21 was not present in the applied references. The Examiner indicated that it did not appear that the applied references included this feature but that she would like us to present the arguments in writing. Accordingly, preliminary agreement was reached, however, an ultimate determination was not made.

Section 2 of the Office Action recites "Claims 1-8, 10-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being unpatentable over Wen (U.S. Patent No. 5,562,453) in view of Nojima (JP 409122106A) and Takebayashi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,357,596)." Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 1 includes at least one feature that is not disclosed, taught, or suggested by Wen, Nojima and Takebayashi, either alone or in combination. Claim 1 is directed to a method for conducting speech therapy and recites the following features:

displaying a picture, wherein the picture comprises a plurality of aspects;

generating speech prompts for information describing each of the plurality of aspects of the picture;

inputting speech responses, including user-identification of each of the plurality of aspects,

performing speech recognition on the input speech responses, including the user-identification of each of the plurality of aspects to recognize words comprising the responses;

performing natural language analysis of the recognized words to determine whether the user-identification of each of the plurality of aspects accurately describes the plurality of aspects,

generating a prompt to use each of the plurality of aspects in a sentence if the user-identification of each of the plurality of aspects accurately describes the plurality of aspects,

receiving a sentence from said user responsive to said prompt to use each of the plurality of aspects,

performing natural language analysis, to analyze the semantic content of the sentence for appropriate sentence correctness, and

providing feedback to the user regarding the correctness of the semantic content of the sentence.

This means that speech prompts are generated requesting information describing aspects of a picture. In response to input speech responses, speech recognition and natural language analysis is performed to determine whether a user has accurately described the aspects of the picture. A prompt is then generated to use each of the aspects in a sentence if the user identification of each of the plurality of aspects accurately describes the aspects. Thus, the generation of a prompt to use the aspects in a sentence is conditioned upon the accurate identification of the aspects. Natural language analysis is then performed on a received sentence and feedback is provided to the user.

None of the applied references disclose, teach, or suggest (either alone or in combination) at least the feature of "generating a prompt to use each of the plurality of aspects in a sentence if the user identification of each of the plurality of aspects accurately describes the plurality of aspects." The Office Action indicates that this feature is taught by Wen in view of Nojima. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Wen is directed to a biofeedback speech tutor toy. The Examiner cites that "Wen does not specifically teach user identification of a plurality of aspects or prompting for a sentence description of the aspects." The Examiner then goes on to recite that "In a similar field of endeavor, Nojima (EP101322 A1 English Equivalent Document of JP 409122106A) discloses presenting a cartoon (a plurality of pictures or aspects) to a user...and determining if the user provided description accurately describes the picture."

In claim 1, a prompt to use each of the plurality of aspects in a sentence is generated only if the user identification of each of the plurality of aspects accurately describes a plurality of aspects. Thus, the generation of a prompt to use the plurality of aspects in a sentence is conditioned upon the accurate identification of those aspects by the user. Wen

includes examples of presenting pictures and prompting a user to identify those pictures. In addition, Wen discloses presenting a picture and requesting and prompting the user to provide a properly phrased and pronounced answer response. Wen, however, is entirely devoid of conditioning a prompt upon the accurate identification of aspects by user. With respect to Nojima, a user is presented with a cartoon strip and asked to describe the cartoon strip. The description of the cartoon is then analyzed in order to evaluate the user. Nojima like Wen, however, is entirely devoid of generating a prompt for the user to use the aspects in a sentence that is conditioned upon the user accurately describing the aspects. Furthermore, Takebayashi is also devoid of this feature.

Requiring the accurate identification of the aspects before prompting a user for a sentence describing the aspects enables a speech therapy system that is extremely motivating; patients like being able to practice before turning on the speech recognizer (unlike a human, the computer does not wait impatiently while they struggle for words), and their speech has immediate and obvious impact on the computer, which is, in a sense, empowering since aphasia represents a terrible loss of the ability to control one's environment through language. See page 7, lines 8-13.

For the reasons described above, none of the applied references disclose, teach, or suggest, either alone or in combination, generating a prompt to use each of the plurality of aspects in a sentence if the user identification of each of the plurality of aspects accurately describes the plurality of aspects. Thus, since the applied references fail to disclose, teach, or suggest at least one feature of claim 1, applicants contend that claim 1 is allowable over the applied references and respectfully request that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

Additionally, applicants contend that there is no teaching or suggestion to combine Nojima with Wen. Wen describes a system that prompts a user to provide a word or a phrase in response to pictures and questions. Wen presents two examples of the use of its system. In a first example, the user is provided with vocal and visual prompts (e.g., a vocal prompt "tiger" and a picture of a tiger.) In response, the user supplies the response with a word, e.g., tiger, which is evaluated by the system. The system then provides feedback to the user. Wen also describes an example in which the user is presented with a question prompt requiring a properly phrased and pronounced answer response. The system analyzes spoken responses by the user and provides biofeedback to enable the user to improve grammar and punctuation. Thus, Wen teaches a complete system that provides both assistance in the pronunciation of individual words and assistance in grammar and

punctuation. Nojima, on the other hand, teaches a system that is used to evaluate the character of a user as an assistance in judging the health of recognition and understanding of a subject. Since Wen teaches a complete system, however, there would be no motivation to add the system of Nojima into Wen. Accordingly, applicants submit that the combination of Wen and Nojima is improper and, therefore, respectfully request that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn on this additional ground.

Claims 12, 21 (as amended), and 28, while not identical to claim 1, include at least the feature of claim 1 discussed above that applicants contend make claim 1 allowable; namely, generating a prompt to use each of the plurality of aspects in a sentence if the user identification of each of the plurality of aspects accurately describes the plurality of aspects. As the applied references fail to disclose, teach, or suggest this feature, applicants contend that claims 12, 21, and 28 are allowable for the same reasons as discussed above with respect to claim 1.

Dependent claims 2-8, 11, 13-20, 22-27, and 29-33 each depend (either directly or indirectly) from one of independent claims 1, 12, 21, and 28. By definition, the dependent claims include all of the features of the independent claim from which they ultimately depend. Accordingly, applicants contend that claims 2-8, 11, 13-20, 22-27, and 29-33 are allowable over the applied references for at least the reasons that the independent claims are allowable and respectfully request that the rejections of these claims be withdrawn.

Section 12 of the Office Action recites that "Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wen in view of Nojima and Takebayashi et al. as applied to claim 1 above, and further in view of Shpiro et al. (US Patent No. 5,487,671)." Claim 9 depends from claim 1 and, thus, includes all the features of claim 1. The addition of Shpiro does not make up for the deficiencies described above with respect for one, i.e., failure to disclose generating a prompt to use each of the plurality of aspects in a sentence if the user identification of each of the plurality of aspects accurately describes a plurality of aspects. Accordingly, applicants contend that none of the applied references disclose, teach, or suggest each and every feature of dependent claim 9. Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 9 be withdrawn.

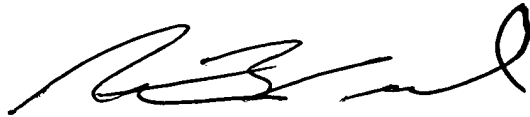
Appln. No.: 09/060,313
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Reply to Office Action of September 6, 2006

TN104 (UNS-474US)

In view of the amendments and remarks set forth above, applicants contend that the application is now in condition for allowance such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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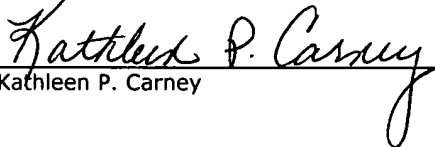
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Dated: November 1, 2006

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